

Air Education and Training Command

Develop America's Airmen Today ... for Tomorrow



U.S. AIR FORCE

On Scene
Commander's Course
Critical Incident Stress
Management (CISM)

Ch, Maj David Terrinoni
Chaplain Service
Institute

Air University: The Intellectual and Leadership Center of the

Integrity - Service - Excellence

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Objective

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To comprehend the elements and processes of Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) as a resource for the on scene commander.



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Overview



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- CISM Defined
- CISM Team and Chaplain Service Personnel
- The Nature of Critical Incident and Stress
- The Crisis Sequence
- The Three D's of CISM



References

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- AFI 44-153, *Critical Incident Stress Management*
- More information is available from the *International Critical Incident Stress Foundation* at www.icisf.org



CISM Defined

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- Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) is a Comprehensive Approach to Traumatic Stress Management
- CISM is not part of safety investigation board – it is an educational and prevention tool for the commander (AFI 44-153.2.1.6.3)



CISM Defined



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- AFI 44-153, p.2.1.6, mandates CISM for all Class A mishaps and recommends it for other traumatic events and after a series of smaller traumatic events
- CISM accentuates the Air Force's commitment to personnel and the goal of maintaining a fully functional force even during and after catastrophic circumstances.



CISM Defined

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- CISM includes programs such as...
 - Pre-Incident Education and Pre-exposure Preparation (PEP) for First Responders
 - Three Step Intervention Program during/after a Critical Incident Response
 - Demobilization (at or near scene)
 - Defusing (at conclusion of event)
 - Debriefing (24-78 hours after the conclusion of the event)



CISM Team



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- AFI 44-153, p.2.1.1, ensures establishment of at least one CISM Team to address local needs
- The CISM Team is multidisciplinary and includes
 - Mental Health/Life Skills
 - Medical
 - Spiritual Support (Chaplain or Chaplain Assistant)
 - Peer Representative
 - Family Support



Why Chaplain Service Personnel



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- People - our most important resource
- Demand - commanders and first sergeants
- Ministry of Presence - presence of the Holy in a myriad of “unholy”
- Known - unique opportunity to interact with people across the life cycle
- Benefits – reestablishes hope, healing, trust, community
- Goal - restore fully functional people and teams
- How? Next slide



Chaplain Goals of CISM



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- Promote spiritual health and well-being of victim, survivor, and responder
- Mitigate critical incident stress impact on life function
- Empower through acceptance/use of available resources
- Assist in the return to effective coping skills
- Educate and celebrate; counsel and console
- Prevent loss of hope, trust, and sense of community



Nature of a Critical Incident

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- Crisis Event
- Sudden, powerful turning point
- Outside normal range of human experience
- Emotionally significant
- Often produces intense reactions (i.e. fear, terror, or helplessness)



Critical Incident Stress



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- Also called “Traumatic Stress”
- Characterized by physical and psychological arousal, or hypersensitivity, arising as a direct result of an exposure to the demand or pressure from a critical incident.
- May result in Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) if left untreated



Traumatic Stress

Impacts

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- Cognitive: What a person is thinking
- Emotional/Psychological: What a person is feeling
- Physical: What the body is doing
- Behavioral/Relational: What a person is doing
- Spiritual: What a person is believing



Crisis Sequence

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- Pre-crisis, Pre-Event
- Event
- Impact
- Resolution, Post-Event



Pre-Crisis and Chaplain



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- Life is “normal” - time for training and preparation
- Chaplain’s role and goal
 - **P**re-Vention – Pre-exposure preparation
 - **E**nter-Vention – On scene support
 - **P**ost-Vention – follow-up Care
- “Pre-Exposure Preparation (PEP) is provided by the CISM Team...when exposure to potentially traumatic events is expected.”
(AFI 44-153, p.3.2)

• PEP is Educational in form of Counseling,



Pre-Exposure Preparation



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- A preventative approach to help individuals prepare for and cope with potentially traumatic events (AFI 44-153, p.3.1)
- Emphasizes normalcy of feeling stress in abnormal situations
- Three-step process: recognize feelings, know and practice positive stress behaviors, and avoid sources of ineffective coping
 - PEP Handout -
 - Ready for Scenario? -



Event



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PRECRISIS

PLANE CRASH



**DEFINE THE EVENT
EXPECTATIONS
REFERRALS**



Impact



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PRECRISIS

PLANE CRASH

IMPACT

- Primary Victim
- Secondary Victim
- Tertiary Victim



Victims

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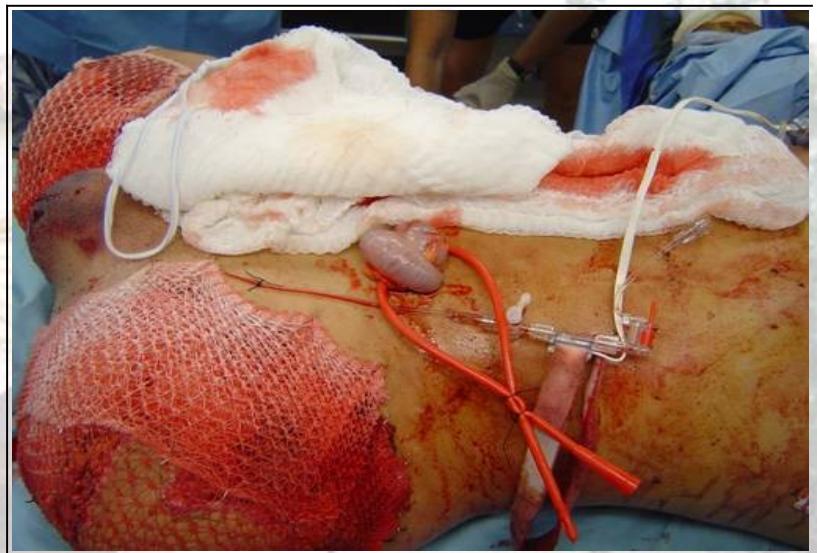


- Primary victims -- those directly traumatized by the event
- Secondary victims -- those who witnessed or managed the event
- Tertiary victims -- those to whom the event may be directly communicated or who may have something in common with the victims



Potential Visuals of Victims

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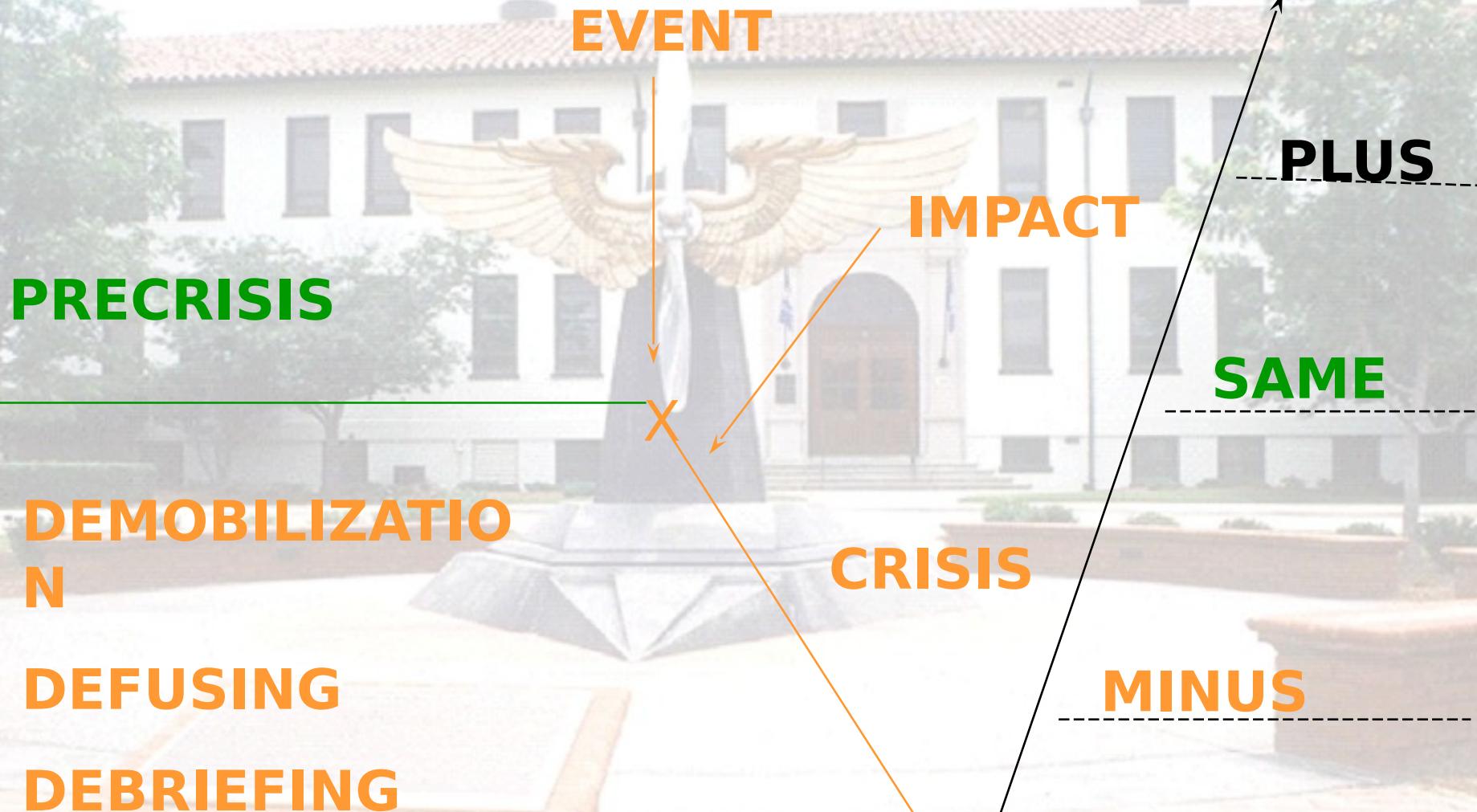


Resolution - Post-Event



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COPING





Demobilization



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- Usually conducted at the scene/near the scene by peer members known by personnel
- At a break or end of shift
- 10 to 20 minutes
- Not a formal session
- Not a place to discuss feelings



Demobilization Goals



- Provide information about critical incident stress to first responders
- Evaluate the functional status of personnel prior to returning to duty
- Provide references and contacts to personnel for later use
- Act as informational support to command element
- Get coping mechanism in place so personnel can go back to work



Defusing

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- Usually conducted at the conclusion of the event at some meeting facility away from the scene by a CISM team
- Personnel are out of service (off shift)
- 20-60 minutes, 6-8 people in group
- Primarily educational in nature
- More formal than demobilization – first line of critical incident response
- Not a critique of ops
- No note taking or recordings



Defusing Goals

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- Lessen the impact of the event
- Assist in speeding up recovery process
- Evaluate need for a formal debriefing or other intervention services
- Provide information to aid a person or team to return to their full function or baseline
- Help reduce symptoms/reactions by being aware of abnormal responses to normal feelings
- Assurance that feelings are normal to abnormal circumstances



Debriefing



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- Structured group meetings facilitated by CISM team and conducted after traumatic event or events to discuss thoughts/emotions
- Formal session, but not therapy; secure location
- 24-78 hours after event's conclusion
- Session is 1-3 hours – no interruptions
- 4-20 personnel in group
- 7-step process (Introduction, fact, thought, reaction, symptom, teaching, re-entry)
- No observers, no notes, keep confidential



Debriefing Goals

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- Lessen impact of the event and assist in speeding up recovery process
- Forum to discuss thoughts, feelings, and physical responses to traumatic event
- Reduce fallacy of uniqueness or abnormality – everyone is in this together and have similar feelings
- Provide structure for personnel to vent, receive information, clarify, and reassure



Summary

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You Never Know...

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I n t e g r i t y - S e r v i c e - E x c e l l e n c e